

THE ECUMENICAL COURIER



Y — JUNE, 1956

VOL. 15, NO. 3

UNVEIL HISTORIC PLAQUE AT BUCK HILL FALLS INN

A plaque commemorating the early history of the ecumenical movement in America, was dedicated by Dr. Henry Smith Leiper, at the annual meeting of the U.S. Conference for the World Council of Churches at Buck Hill Falls, Pa., in April. This bronze plaque unveiled in the library of the Buck Hill Falls Inn, bore the following inscription: "In this room April 12-25, 1947, was held the first meeting in America of the Provisional Committee, later to become the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, then in process of formation. In attendance were 53 distinguished church leaders of 21 communions from 15 nations representing more than 150 denominations in 50 nations, including the Friends. Here were drawn up final comprehensive plans for the official launching of the World Council of Churches at its first World Assembly, in Amsterdam, Holland, August 2-September 4, 1948."

Left to right in picture: Dr. Henry Smith Leiper, Mrs. Henry Hill Pierce, Bishop Henry Knox Sherill, Dr. Samuel McCrea Cavert, Mrs. Van Santvoord Merle-Smith, Dr. William J. Gallagher, all "pioneers" of the ecumenical movement in the United States.

... The word, *oikoumene*, from which we get the word ecumenical in English, meaning "the whole inhabited earth," is used some fifteen times in the New Testament—Jesus himself used it. . . .

"The gospel of the kingdom," he said, "shall be preached in the whole world (*oikoumene*) for a testimony unto all the nations. . . ."

Perhaps, after all, it is not the bigness of the word that disturbs us but the bigness of the idea which this amazingly rich New Testament word *oikoumene* conveys. To our provincial minds steeped in narrowness, the ecumenical movement is far too great to be fully comprehended.

"Ecumenical" is a big word but the idea which it expresses is bigger and it is one of the majestic ideals of the New Testament which must be restored.

—*The Christian Evangelist*



CENTRAL COMMITTEE TO MEET IN HUNGARY

The first major meeting of the World Council of Churches to take place in Eastern Europe has been scheduled for July 28-August 5. The 90-member Central Committee of the World Council will meet in Matrahaza, Hungary, a small resort 2100 feet high in the hills north-east of Budapest.

Several member churches in Eastern Europe may be represented at the meeting and a special invitation has been issued to Chinese member churches to send representatives, according to Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, general secretary of the World Council of Churches. No delegates from Chinese churches have attended meetings of the World Council since the first Assembly was held in Amsterdam in 1948.

A special ecumenical service has been planned for Sunday, July 29, in Budapest. Members of the Central Committee, including church men

and women from many different parts of the world, will take part.

Delegates will visit local congregations of Hungarian churches to speak and preach on Sunday, August 5.

"Proselytism and Religious Liberty" and "Churches and the Building of a Responsible International Society" are main themes for the Central Committee meeting.

The World Council Executive Committee will meet in Vienna, Austria, July 26 to 28. A series of departmental and divisional working committees will be held at Herrenalb, Germany, July 19 to 23. From July 22 to 25 the Executive Committee of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, a joint agency of the World Council and the International Missionary Council, will meet in Herrenalb. The CCIA is arranging a special celebration of its tenth anniversary this summer.

The Password is No Secret

PROBATIONER: That's a clumsy word.

PROFESSOR: Which one?

PROB: Ecumenical. . . .

PROF: If you think the word is awkward, imagine what must be its witness: about every kind and diverse type of those who believe ever spawned by Christendom.

PROB: What does the World Council of Churches propose to do with them?

PROF: House them.

PROB: *Oikos* means house in Greek. I'm with you.

PROF: So we use the word *Oikoumene*. The English is *ecumenical*. The whole faith is housed—all races, nations, and branches of the Church.

PROB: Do you have to be religious, even Christian, to be ecumenical?

PROF: Why?

PROB: Electricity is ecumenical, isn't it? Or, as someone has said, "Water is an ecumenical H₂O from Turkey to Timbuktu." . . .

PROF: If you are going to be a disciple of the Galilean fishermen, you are something other than a natural process, you are committed.

PROB: If you are to be housed, you've got to ask to be let in?

PROF: And repeat the password.

PROB: Like a secret club?

PROF: Not quite. It's chiseled into the stone over the doorway, so none need plead ignorance. "I believe in Jesus Christ. . . ."

PROB: I'm against secret societies.

PROF: This is no secret society. As I say, the password is everywhere apparent. All that is required is that you repeat it.

PROB: Just to get in?

PROF: To identify yourself.

PROB: Could not the hypocrites use the words?

PROF: They could and they do.

PROB: What advantage is there then? . . .

PROF: The value of the password is not the impression it makes on the one who hears. *Witness* counts is your witness.

PROB: You won't be let in otherwise?

PROF: This is different from water which is just naturally water. It can't help itself.

PROB: And if I believe in Jesus?

PROF: You're a member of the household.

—by Roger Ortmyer, in *Month*

Dr. West Joins Institute Staff

The Rev. Dr. Charles Converse West of New York is the new Resident Lecturer at the Ecumenical Institute of the World Council of Churches, at Chateau de Bossey, Celigny, Switzerland.

Dr. West served the Presbyterian (U.S.A.) board at Cheeloo University, Tsinan, and later at Nanking University. When the Communist government of China made it impossible, in 1950, for the work there to continue, the Wests were transferred to Europe and became part of the "fraternal workers" program with the Evangelical Land Church in Berlin, carried on in cooperation with the World Council of Churches reconstruction program.

Returning to the United States on furlough in 1953, he was on the faculty of a "Study Fellowship" to help new missionaries understand the "world revolution" in areas to which they go, and serve more effectively in the world mission of the Church.

Dr. West is a graduate of Columbia College (B.A. 1942, Phi Beta Kappa) and Union Theological Seminary (B.D. 1945). He was awarded a Ph.D. by Yale Divinity School. He is an ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

Prior to the Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches (1954), he participated in consultations on "Responsible Society," and served on the working committee for this subject (Section III) at the Assembly.

The Ecumenical Institute is housed in the picturesque medieval Chateau de Bossey, near Geneva. Here training courses and conferences are conducted for church workers and lay groups of various vocations. From October to February, a graduate course in ecumenics is held in cooperation with the University of Geneva. Thirty-three students from 13 countries were registered for 1955-56. Photos below: (left) Dr. West; (center) a view of the Institute; (right) Dr. H. H. Wolf, Director of the Institute.

CONFERENCE FOR SOUTHERN LEADERS

An "Ecumenical Institute" for church leaders in the Southern States, will be held at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, June 3 through June 8, 1956.

Director of the Institute, which is sponsored by the Southern Office of the National Council of Churches, is the Rev. J. Edward Lantz, Executive Director of the Southern Office. This institute will be interdenominational and interracial.

Dr. Herman L. Turner, Acting Chairman of the Southern Advisory Committee, National Council of Churches, will deliver the keynote address on "Church Cooperation in Our Present Situation."

Dr. Henry Smith Leiper, formerly executive head of the New York office of the World Council of Churches, will give two lectures on "The World Council of Churches, its Nature and Function" and "The National Council of Churches, its Nature and Function."

Dr. J. Oscar Lee and Dr. Alfred S. Kramer, Executive Director and Associate Executive Director of the Department of Racial and Cultural Relations of the National Council of Churches, will conduct a workshop in racial relations.

There will also be workshops on Local and State Council Administration, Public Education and Religion, Christian Education, Christian Life and Work, Christian Missions, United Church Women, United Christian Youth, Audio-Visuals, Public Relations, Peace Education and Action, Church Music, Preaching the Ecumenical Gospel, and Use and Understanding of the Bible.



Material for Oberlin Conference

Plans for the North American Faith and Order conference, to be held at Oberlin, Ohio, September 3-10, 1957, are described in a new six-page folder "What Is the Nature of the Unity We Seek?" Single copies are available free on request from the World Council of Churches.

To stimulate discussion of the conference theme at the "grassroots", an outline has been prepared by Dr. Paul Minear, Secretary for Study and Program for the conference. This booklet suggests the bases for fourteen "Ecumenical Conversations" which might be arranged by church, council or campus groups during the coming year. The groups are encouraged to discuss these pertinent topics "to see whether there is a common mind with regard to the nature of the unity you are seeking in your locality." A thorough bibliography is included. *Order Ecumenical Conversations* from the World Council of Churches, 50¢ each. The Conference is sponsored by the U.S. Conference for the World Council of Churches, the National Council of the Churches of Christ, U.S.A., and the Canadian Council of Churches.

For the thirtieth year in succession British and American clergymen will exchange pulpits for a few weeks this summer. Ten distinguished churchmen from Britain will visit in this country, preach in various pulpits and take part in a number of denominational and interdenominational conferences. A like number of American pastors will go to Britain. The councils in the two countries are co-sponsors.

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NEW!

The World Council of Churches—What It Is and What It Does. An illustrated 24 pp. 8½" x 11" brochure. Excellent to put in hands of prospective "friends". 50¢ each.

A new *Bulletin d'Orientations Oecumeniques* has just appeared in Beirut. Among those collaborating in it are Orthodox Christians, Protestants and Catholics.

The new Bulletin says: "During this second half of the 20th century ecumenism can no longer be considered as the proper name of a certain organization, but as the common name for the efforts of all who are working for unity of mind in Truth and unity of heart in Charity. In this sense ecumenism is not the prerogative of a particular confession but a fact which applies to every Christian who realizes the demands of his faith, and to every church which realizes its mission. . . ."

The "Council on Christian Unity" has published a 48-page booklet setting forth the *Disciples' Christ Response to Evanston*. Says the introduction: "Disciples looked forward to Evanston with great expectation. They followed its daily proceedings with solicitude and a genuine sense of participation. Since the Assembly their primary response has been one of gratitude and confidence and of anticipation of the greater manifestation of the oneness of the Church which it promises."

THE ECUMENICAL COURIER is a bi-monthly bulletin published by the United States Conference of the World Council of Churches, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. Elsie Thomson Culver, Secretary for Public Relations, editor. The Council unites 164 Anglican, Orthodox and Protestant communions in 47 countries. Neither the COURIER nor the World Council of Churches is responsible for opinions quoted in its columns.

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U. S. POSTAGE

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New York, N. Y.

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BOOKS

Christ and His Church by Anders Nygren. Translated by Alan Carlsten. (The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 125 pp. \$2.50.) "A penetrating study of the central and critical issues involved in the Church's search for unity."

History of the World's Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations by Clarence Prouty and others. (Association Press, New York, 746 pp. \$6.00.)

Christianity and the Asian Revolution edited by Rajah B. Manikam. (Friendship Press, New York, 293 pp. \$2.50.) "A book written by Asians about Asians . . . Leading Christians in ten Asian countries tell what is happening on their home grounds."

The Church in Southeast Asia by Winburn T. Thomas and Rajah B. Manikam. (Friendship Press, New York, 171 pp. cloth \$2.50, paper \$1.25.) ". . . The story of the church's expansion must be treated as a whole rather than in terms of denominational extensions."

The Significance of the Church by Robert McAfee Brown. (The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 96 pp. \$1.00.) "Lively reading—a vigorous, clear view of the Church both past and present."

The Christian Character by Stephen Neill

Reading the Bible Today by D. T. Niles

John's Witness to Jesus by G. Appleton

From Brahma to Christ by L. Tilak

Beginning from Jerusalem by J. Foster

These are volumes of "World Christian Books" series sponsored by the I.M.C. Order from Association Press, N.Y.C., \$1.25 each.

Foundations of Christian Knowledge by Georgia Harkness. (Abingdon Press, Nashville, 160 pp., \$2.75.) "For those who wish to clarify their own religious certainties—and especially those who guide others in their search for Christian truth."

Give and Take by Herman Ahrens. (Friendship Press, New York, 163 pp., \$2.50, paper \$1.25.) Readable and significant story of ecumenical work camps in Southeast Asia."

Encounter with Revolution by M. Richard Shaull. (Association Press, New York, 145 pp., \$2.50.) "For a single, satisfying study of this year's foreign-mission theme, 'The Christian Mission in a Revolutionary World,' this book would be an excellent choice."

The Strangeness of the Church by Daniel T. Jenkins. (Doubleday & Company, New York, 188 pp. \$2.95.) "The Christian Church differs from all other institutions . . . it originated not in any purely human act or design, but in God's eternal purpose of salvation for mankind."

Challenge and Decision by A. Denis Baly. (Seabury Press, New York, 65¢.)

Youth Guide on Southeast Asia by Fred Cloud. (Friendship Press, New York, 48 pp. 50¢.)

The Protestant Tradition by J. S. Whale. (Cambridge University Press, New York, \$3.75.)

Christianity and Symbolism by F. W. Dillistone. (The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, \$4.50.)

African Marriage by Thomas Price

The Christian Church and Islam in West Africa by J. Spencer Trimingham

Towards a Theology of Mission by Wilhelm Andersen

International Missionary Council Research Pamphlets now available from Friendship Press, N.Y.C. 60¢ each.

Communist-Christian Encounter in East Europe by Robert Tobias. (Butler University, Indianapolis. 600 pp. \$8.00. To educators and educational institutions, \$6.00.) First 300 pages is an analysis of existing situation in light of personal association with church life and leaders while author was on staff of the World Council of Churches. Second half is documentation from Soviet orbit countries, 12-page bibliography, index.

CHURCH AROUND THE WORLD

LEBANON: Church delegates from America, Australia, India and many European countries will meet with leading Christians from the Middle East in Beirut, Lebanon, on May 21st, to consider anew the relief needs of Arab refugees in the continued absence of a solution to their tragic situation. The conference, sponsored jointly by the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council, is being organized by the Department of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees of the World Council of Churches.

Speakers at the Conference will include Mr. Henry Labouisse, director of United Nations Relief Works Agency, Prof. Charles Malik of the American University, Beirut, and former Ambassador from Lebanon to the U.S., and Dr. Alford Carleton, former president of Aleppo College and executive of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Dr. Robert C. Mackie, chairman of the Administrative Committee of the Department of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees, will preside.

GERMANY: Some 1,600 Roman Catholics in the village of Ostrach, W. Germany, contributed generously to a building fund to provide a place of worship for the Protestant minority of 400. The Catholics also donated materials and their own manual labor to the project. Previously, the Protestants held services in the village hall and later in the Catholic parish hall.

NIGERIA: The first consultation of leaders from West African Student Christian movements ever to be held took place at University College, Ibadan, Nigeria, under the sponsorship of the World's Student Christian Federation, during the recent visit of Valdo Galland, its Latin American Secretary. It brought together representatives of Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Gold Coast, Togoland, Dahomey, Nigeria, Liberia and the French Cameroons. The consultation was held at the suggestion of West Africans, in order that they might discuss together common problems and make practical proposals of ways in which the Federation can most effectively help in the development of their work.

SWITZERLAND: More than 40 delegates from 14 nations attended a conference on the training of the laity for their ministry in the world held at the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, near Geneva, April 2nd-8th. The conference was held under the auspices of the Department on Laity of the World Council of Churches.

COLOMBIA: Religious persecution in Colombia has been intensified. Protestants are in the most serious situation since the start of the difficulties in 1948, it is reported.

In a communication dated May 1st, the Evangelical Confederation of Colombia states that during the second half of April, 30 Evangelical churches were closed and seven Colombian pastors jailed. All forms of violence have again appeared: shooting, threats, and every sort of pressure through the civil authorities, including jailing, fines, sealing of churches, etc.

Bishop Sante Uberto Barbieri, a president of the World Council of Churches reporting to its Executive Committee in Australia, affirmed that while the persecution of Protestants in Colombia was to some extent political and to some extent directed against fanatical religious groups, there was also "abundant evidence of real persecution against responsible Protestant Christians."

CANADA: Member papers of the Associated Church Press—142 Protestant publications in the U.S. and Canada—have a total circulation exceeding 11 million and reach an estimated 30 million readers it was reported to the group's 37th annual meeting in Toronto.

INDIA: A missionary oratorio with biblical lyrics and combining Occidental and Oriental musical styles, has come from India. *The Mission Suite* was written by Dr. Henry H. Presler, D.D., of the Post-Graduate School, Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur, M.P.

It was presented by the Landour Communion Choir, consisting of sixty missionaries of various denominations and from all parts of New India. The central theme is the religious experience of a typical Christian missionary today.